



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Seeks Public Comments on Use of Three New Herbicides to Control Noxious Weeds on Public Lands

To expand its existing list of approved herbicide active ingredients (herbicides) to treat noxious weeds and other invasive species on Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-managed public lands, the BLM today notified the public of the availability of a draft Vegetation Treatments Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The draft Programmatic (region-wide) EIS evaluates the use of three new herbicides to treat vegetation on public lands in 17 Western states. The new herbicides evaluated in the Programmatic EIS are aminopyralid (known by the trade name Milestone), fluroxypyr (Vista), and rimsulfuron (Matrix). A notice of availability of the draft Programmatic EIS, published in today's Federal Register by the Environmental Protection Agency, initiates a 45-day public comment period on the document.

The Draft Programmatic EIS provides full reviews and analyzes the environmental and human impacts of the three new herbicides, which would give public land managers greater flexibility in undertaking vegetation treatments in the field. Milestone is primarily used to control knapweeds and thistles; Vista for prickly pear and perennial broad-leaf species; and Matrix for downy brome (cheatgrass) and medusahead rye.

Noxious weeds and other invasive species infest approximately 80 million acres of the more than 245 million acres of public lands under the BLM's jurisdiction. Annually, the BLM treats about 350,000 acres using a variety of vegetation management tools, including herbicides, to control noxious weeds and other invasive species in its effort to conserve and restore native vegetation, watersheds, and fish and wildlife habitat.

The Draft Programmatic EIS addresses a wide range of issues, including the effect of the herbicides on the health of humans, vegetation, fish and wildlife, livestock, and wild horses and burros. The Draft Programmatic EIS also looks at water quality and Native American use of resources, and evaluates the cumulative impact of the new and other herbicides by the BLM and other landowners in the West.

The notice, titled *Notice of Availability of Draft Vegetation Treatments Using Aminopyralid, Fluroxypyr, and Rimsulfuron on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*, is accessible at <http://blm.gov/3vkd>.

The public comment period closes August 3, 2015. Public comments may be submitted to blm_wo_vegeis@blm.gov.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use

and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2013, the BLM generated \$4.7 billion in receipts from public lands.

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